

REMARKS

Claims 1-5, 7 and 10-22 are pending in the present application. Claim 21 is withdrawn from consideration. Claims 1-5, 7, 10-12 and 22 are rejected. Claims 1, 20 and 22 are herein amended. No new matter has been presented.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 1-5, 7, 10-20 and 22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over EP 1152036 (Kanda et al.) in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,173,393 (Sezi et al.) and U.S. Patent No. 3,912,450 (Boucher).

The Examiner notes that Sezi, in column 6, lines 60-68, in column 8, lines 9-1 1, discloses that a surfactant solution that is metal-free, and is non-ionic, such as alcohol is applied on the photoresist structure, and the treated photoresist structure is dried by heating. The Examiner further asserts that Sezi, in column 7, lines 30-58, discloses that the photoresist structure is treated with a reactant that comprises isopropyl alcohol (non-ionic surfactant) and has a solvent such as water (that does not dissolve the resist pattern). The Examiner further notes that Sezi, in column 3, lines 3-6, in column 4, lines 44-60, discloses that the photoresist material that forms the photoresist structure is derived from polymerization or copolymerization of olefinically unsaturated anhydrides, and that the anhydrides can be cyclic. The Examiner further notes that Boucher, in column 5, lines 28-42, discloses the use of nonionic polyoxyethylene as a nonionic surfactant, and in column 9, lines 7-12, that the polyoxyethylene is a derivative of a primary alcohol based compound.

Applicants herein amend the claims to clarify the invention. Thereafter, Applicants respectfully disagree with the rejections because the claimed limitations are neither taught nor suggested by the cited references, alone or in combination.

The claims clearly require that the nonionic surfactant is at least one of polyoxyethylene monoalkyl ether compounds and phenol ethoxylate-based compounds. Such alternative compounds are neither taught nor suggested by the cited references.

Therefore, because this limitation is not taught or suggested by the cited references, alone or in combination, Applicants respectfully submit that the rejections are overcome.

In view of the aforementioned amendments and accompanying remarks, Applicants submit that the claims, as herein amended, are in condition for allowance. Applicants request such action at an early date.

If this paper is not timely filed, Applicants respectfully petition for an appropriate extension of time. The fees for such an extension or any other fees that may be due with respect to this paper may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-2866.

Respectfully submitted,

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